Programs Branch

User Report

A MODEL VICTIM SERVICE PROGRAM FOR POLICE OFFICERS

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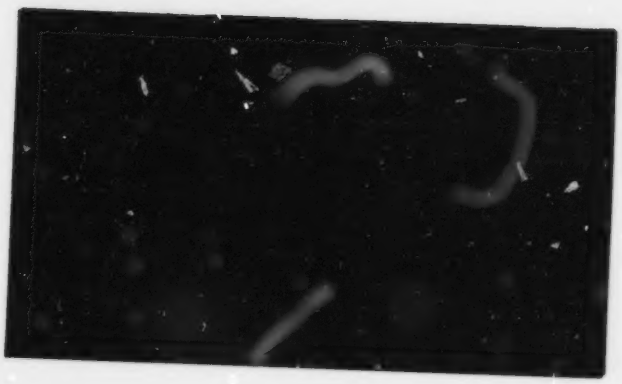

Judith Muir
Calgary, Alberta

A MODEL VICTIM SERVICE PROGRAM FOR POLICE OFFICERS

No. 1986-03

This working paper was prepared under contract for the Research Division in 1986 and is made available as submitted to the Ministry. The views expressed are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada.

This working paper is available in French. Ce document de travail est disponible en français.

ABSTRACT

This report provides a model victim service program which could be implemented by police officers in the course of their work and which could be used either in conjunction with a special victim service unit or in place of such units in medium and small-sized police departments. This program calls for a comprehensive training program for police officers (and/or recruits) to increase their awareness and improve their response to the needs of victims, and a liaison and referral mechanism to services appropriate for victims within the police department, in the community and in other sectors of the criminal justice system.

The report then follows with case studies of five pilot projects which attempted to implement the model of victim service. It details the varying degrees of success attained at each site, and the factors affecting the levels of success. The report concludes with suggested guidelines for successful implementation of such a "generalist" program. These guidelines include adequate training, availability of support services in the community and in other criminal justice sectors, a mechanism to bridge the gap in services between what officers could provide at the scene and those available in the community, and active support for the program from senior police management.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent years, many police departments have made significant advances towards meeting the needs of victims of crime. In some jurisdictions, this has meant setting up a program staffed by specialists with the sole aim of providing victim services. A complementary approach to these specialist programs that can be undertaken by police departments is to improve the level of services of police officers in the normal course of their work through changes in some procedures and practices, enhanced training for police officers and recruits, and maximum utilization of available services in the commuity.

The Program Model

The first section of this report describes a model of a victim service program which could be implemented by police officers in the course of their work and which could be used in conjunction with a special victim service unit, or in place of such units in medium and small-sized police departments. This model is sometimes referred to as the "generalist" program of police-based victim assistance. This program generally does not always require the establishment of a new organizational structure. Officers respond to complaints as previously, but in the normal course of their investigative activities they are more aware of and respond to the immediate and subsequent needs of crime victims by:

- giving the individual verbal and/or written information,
- ensuring that the complainant understands the inforamtion through explanation, etc.,
- adopting behaviors that are sensitive to victims,
- providing crisis management or calling in others who are skilled at crisis management,
- by making suggestions where victims might obtain needed services or going some way towards initiating the referrals,
- re-contacting victims (when appropriate) to ensure that initial suggestions and referrals have been acted upon,
- providing pertinent new information when appropriate, and
- responding promptly to victims' request for information or service.

Enhanced Training

The enhanced training given to police officers prepares them to accept and engage in these activities. Ideally, they should be instructed in the following areas:

- victims issues and rights,
- victims needs and awareness,
- officer behaviors,
- crisis intervention techniques,
- non-crisis service giving,
- victim service activities that are required of them,
- information about community, and
- information about police and other community services.

Program Coordinator

This program model also calls for a program coordinator who should be responsible for:

- developing a training course to be given to all police officers,
- assembling and printing information to be distributed to officers and crime victims, and ensuring that the information remains current and available,
- ensuring that coordination exists between community-based agencies and the program, including referral mechanisms,
- seeing that the program is introduced and implemented,
- developing program promotional aids and performing public relations functions; and
- providing some direct services to bridge the gap between what officers can provide in the normal course of their activities and what is available from community and other agencies.

Services of the Program

The types of services generally considered suitable for such a police-based victim assistance program are information services and direct aid.

Making the criminal justice system more responsive to crime victims requires that victims are provided with relevant information. The information may be given in writing or orally, but for practical purposes, it is advisable to assemble some of the information in a brief package that can be easily distributed by police officers. This may include information on:

- the criminal justice system generally,
- the services available from police community agencies and other criminal justice sectors,
- the police investigation with which they are involved, and
- the court case with which they are involved.

The direct aid such a program could offer includes:

- crisis intervention or 'at the scene' services to ensure a victim's emergency need is attended,
- referral, especially through distribution of packaged information and explanation,
- follow-up services regarding previous referrals (where appropriate) and provision of additional information, especially about the progress of the case. Case information is sometimes provided by support services within the police department rather than by the officer attending the scene.

In order for the program to function, liaison has to be established between the police department and other service agencies in the community and a referral mechanism maintained. Support services must also be established within the police department to handle inquiries and other requests for services.

Case Studies

The report follows with case studies of five pilot projects which attempted to implement the "generalist" model of victim assistance. The planned program structure and operation involves police guidelines in the form of an insert to the training manual, training for police officers, distribution of pamphlets containing information on provincial and local services to victims and a case identification number, a project coordinator to provide liaison between the police and victims and to provide victims with information.

The five pilot projects attained differing levels of success, depending on the situation and environments the program planners and administrators faced. Some sites already operated victim programs and the new service was viewed either as complementary or as an unneeded duplication. The latter situation did not encourage implementation. Further, the extent that police officers had earlier been exposed to victim service training and the type of training received affected the ease of implementation. There was also a great variety in the training technique. Smaller sites appear to have had an easier time organizing and running the training component of the victim assistance program. In effect, each site presented a unique environment which affected its operation, administration and achievement.

Guidelines for Successful Implementation

From the experience of the pilot projects, the following conditions seem to be essential to successful implementation of a "generalist" police-based victim assistance program.

- Police officers (and even recruits) should be adequately trained in victims issues, victims needs, community services available in the community and appropriate officer behavior.

- There must be support services available in the community and in the justice system if officers are expected to alert victims to possible assistance there. But more importantly, there must also be organizational support within the police department itself to bridge the gap between the services which could be provided by the officers at the scene and services available in the community. For example, if victims are advised they could obtain case progress information, a mechanism within the police department which could handle the inquiries is necessary.

- Active support from senior police management for the program is crucial to its success. Since a program of this sort involves all police officers, cooperation and compliance could only be effected by a firm and clear message of support from senior management.

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CRIME VICTIM SERVICE PROGRAMS:
A POLICE-BASED MODEL

1.A. INTRODUCTION

The Federal-Provincial Task Force on Justice for Victims of Crime in its report made 79 recommendations or proposals for change about how crime victims should be treated by the criminal justice system, and what rights should be afforded them. These recommendations implicitly or explicitly called for various arms of the criminal justice system to increase services, to coordinate, and/or to alter the way that crime victims are treated.

Enactment of the recommendations requires that police departments and others within (and outside of) the criminal justice system provide new services, and change some of the practices and procedures they currently follow with respect to services already available to victims and witnesses. Many police departments have made significant advances toward meeting some of these recommendations. In some jurisidictions, this has meant setting up a program staffed by specialists with the sole aim of providing victim services. Several of these programs have been successfully integrated into their police departments and have been well received by crime victims. In other cases, community-based groups have been formed to provide services.

There is another complementary approach that can be taken by police departments in their attempts to meet some of the recommendations of the Task Force. It is to improve the level of service to crime victims, not solely by setting up a special service or program, but by incorporating improvements into existing policing activities, using existing personnel and resources. This approach is not comprehensive in itself and requires support services both within the criminal justice system and the community to ensure that an adequate level of service is available. It normally means that changes are made to some practices and procedures, but they can in many cases be accomplished with existing staff. This kind of approach can vary from routinizing police follow-up with each victim (by letter or phone call) to more extensive improvement of service made possible because of officer training in crisis intervention techniques. These programs, once implemented,

do not require the extent of financial resources for operation that specialist programs do, and this is an appealing feature.

Other than financial, there are other and very important reasons for this type of approach. One is that victim services are a logical part of regular officers' duties and, in fact, have traditionally been offered by the police who have been the main providers of victim services in the past. For this reason, to the extent that it is reasonable and efficient, provision of service by officers is considered to be desirable. For those accustomed to assisting victims, the institution of a program that details the services officers are to provide merely formalizes and recognizes that service. It also helps to encourage others who are not in the habit of doing so. These types of activities also demonstrate that police departments recognize the importance and the role of victims in the criminal justice system.

Another reason often given for selecting this approach is that the special relationship that exists between officers and victims makes officers appropriate parties to offer service. This special relationship results from their being present when the most urgent services are required, and that they are in a good position to identify need. It also stems from the fact officers meet victims at very stressful times. In terms of effectiveness, the officer may be the best person to assist the victim.

A further reason for this type of program is that serviced or satisfied victims may be more inclined to cooperate with the criminal justice system and thus, there may be some positive impact on case investigations and prosecutions.

It is important to remember that this type of initiative does not and is not meant to provide a full range of victim services. As one component of comprehensive victim services, it requires the support of other community and criminal justice system-based victim services. Similarly, specialized programs require cooperation and coordination with police, court and community agencies.

The type of program discussed in this report is valuable in that it may be an effective tool in rural areas or small centres where staff is not available for a specialized program. It also represents an important adjunct to victim services where specialized programs operate in that police officer activities at the scene of a complaint and shortly thereafter represent an area of victim services that cannot always be assumed by specialized program staff. The service that officers themselves provide will always remain a critical component of victim services.

Victims need service at any one (or all) of three different time frames (at the scene, shortly thereafter, and/or in the long-term). Police officers or others (special police staff or community groups) may provide what is required at any one of these periods although at certain times, it will be more appropriate and practical for one or other of them to deliver the service. For example, police are not likely to have the resources to provide long-term care, while at-the-scene service may be most effectively offered by them. The service model that is described here suggests that, for reasons of practicality and efficiency, police officers should, where possible, provide needed service in the normal course of their daily activities. Other specialists, whether they be police, court or community-based, are still required to provide other services. These agencies offer complementary services, each requiring the others and each a component of a comprehensive victim service program.

An example of this type of initiative was recently piloted in several localities of various-sized urban and rural populations. The program's general goal was to make the criminal justice process more responsive to the needs of the crime victim. Making the system more responsive meant that officers took an active role by providing salient information (verbal or written) to victims at appropriate times, assisting people to access needed services through referral, and providing direct service to victims and followed up on cases when required.

The following sections describe the program model in detail, present case studies of program histories and operations, outline implementation problems and issues, and suggest guidelines for program success.

1 B. VICTIM PROGRAM MODEL

A program such as the one mentioned above is designed to make the criminal justice system more responsive to crime victims by improving and enhancing the services officers and the police department routinely provide and by assisting victims to access other needed community services. Most services are carried out by existing staff in the normal course of their daily activities. A schematic model, which includes the components that are required to make such a program work, is illustrated in Figure 1. Figure 2 outlines various activities that are required during the planning, operation and evaluation stages. A description of its main components and daily operation is described below.

This police-based victim service program model does not always require the establishment of a new organizational structure. Goals are accomplished by adapting and improving officers' existing activities. Where new resources are required they are for support services such as training progrm development, etc. In essence, officers respond to complaints as previously, but in the normal course of their investigation activities are more aware of and respond to the immediate needs of the crime victim. This is done,

- by giving the individual verbal and/or written information,
- by insuring that the complainant understands the information through explanation, etc.,
- by adopting behaviors that are sensitive to victims,
- by providing crisis management or calling in others who are skilled in this, and
- by making suggestions where victims might obtain needed services or going some way toward initiating the referral.

This model also demands that attention is paid to needs victims may have at a later date but which are related to the original complaint. This is achieved:

- by recontacting victims (when appropriate) to ensure that initial suggestions and referrals have been acted upon,
- by providing pertinent new information (e.g., charges laid, etc.) when appropriate,
- by responding promptly to victims' requests for information or service.

The training and introduction given to police officers prepares them to accept and engage in these activities. In that training they are instructed in:

- needs awareness,
- crisis intervention techniques,
- non-crisis service giving,
- victim service activities that are required of them,
- information about community, and
- information about police and other community services.

Techniques that may be used include multi-media approaches and role playing, as well as discussion of the particular needs certain types of victims may have (e.g., the elderly). Armed with the skills and information they are well equipped to deal with victim concerns as they arise.

It is certain that proper training and introduction is a crucial component of this model and it is mainly for these requirements that expenditure of personnel and monetary resources are necessary. These activities form the pre-requisite operations of the program. A program co-ordinator is required for this. That person's main activities would include:

Figure 1. PROGRAM MODEL: Police-Based Victim Service Programs

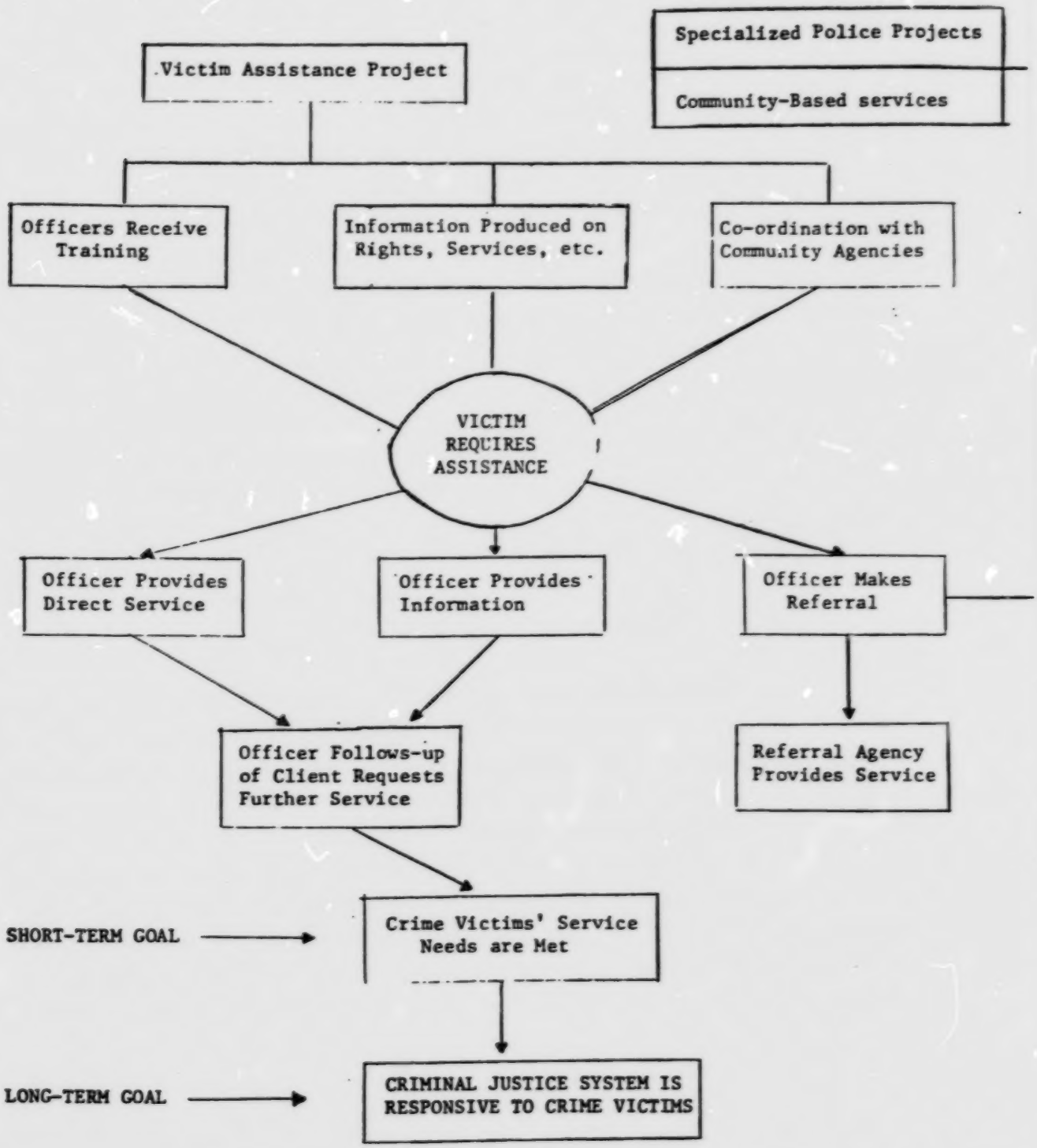
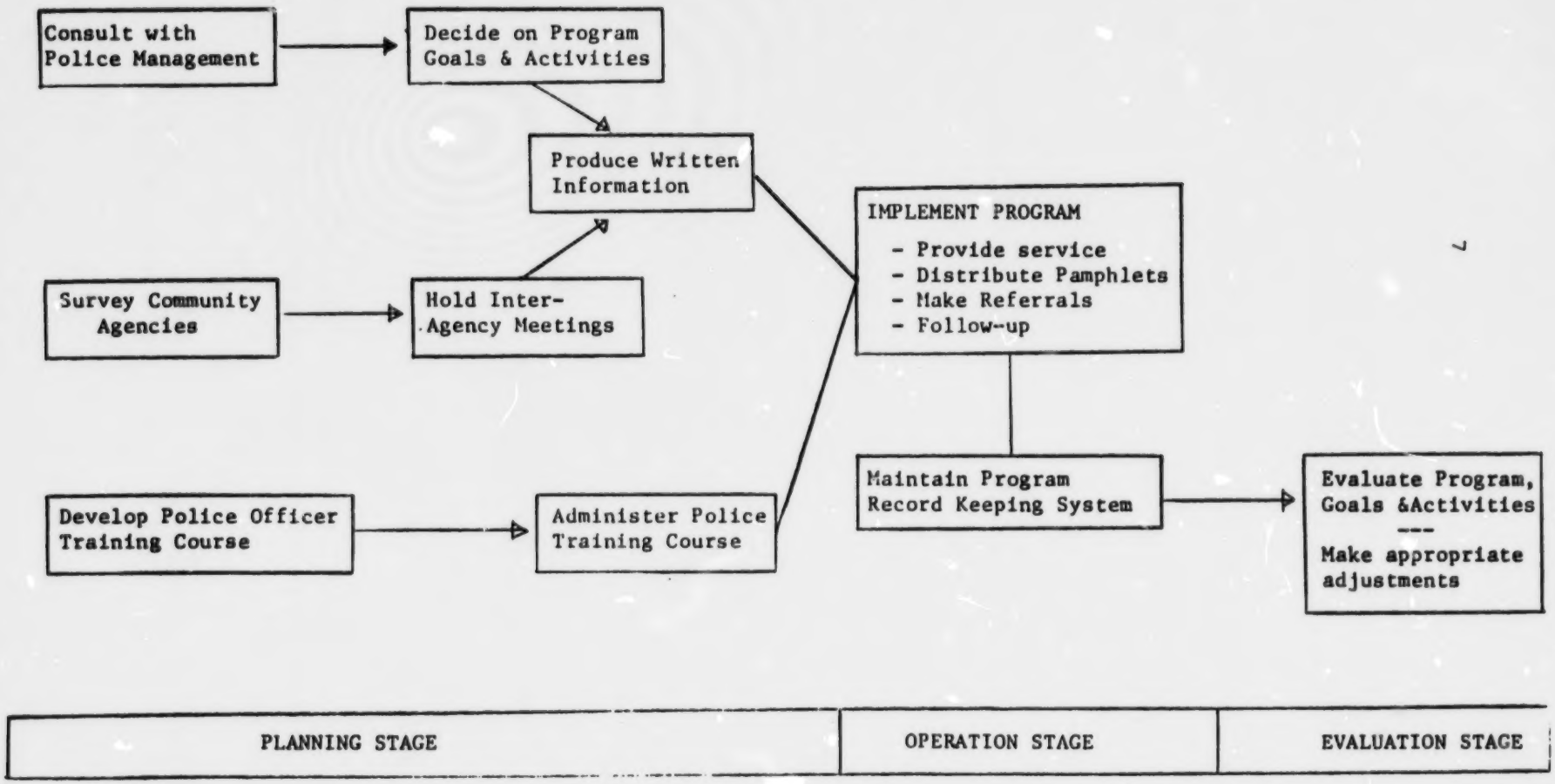


Figure 2: Program Development Activities



- developing a training course to be given to all police officers;

- assembling and printing information to be distributed to officers and crime victims, and ensuring that the information remains available;

- ensuring that coordination exists between community-based agencies and the program, including referral mechanisms, etc.;

- seeing that the program is introduced and implemented;

- developing program promotional aids and performing public relation functions; and

- providing some direct services to bridge the gap between what officers can provide in the normal course of their activities and what is available from community and other agencies.

Because of the considerable effort required to do this, it is difficult to envision this type of program model without a coordinator position, particularly in larger centres. While not necessarily housed within a community service or crime prevention section, these types of positions are often found there. Once the program is operating well, such a position may not be necessary, although some on-going monitoring function would need to be incorporated.

Included in required operations are activities by senior police management in support of the program and aimed at ensuring that officers fully implement the program.

1.C. PROGRAM SERVICES

The following material elaborates in more detail the service-giving activities that are envisioned by the program.

Information Services

Making the criminal justice system more responsive to crime victims requires that victims are provided with relevant information. This may include information about:

- the criminal justice system generally;
- the services available from the police, community agencies and other parts of the criminal justice system;
- the police investigation with which they are involved; and
- the court case with which they are involved.

The information may be given either in writing or orally but, for practical purposes, it is advisable to assemble some of the information in a pamphlet or a brief and small package that can be easily distributed by police officers, and easily used by crime victims. An advantage of written information is that the recipient can review it at leisure.

The content of the package of information could focus on general information about victimization and the criminal justice system, and more specific or local information about services available to crime victims in their own community and instructions on how to get case and court information from the appropriate parties. Because each community varies in the service agencies they have, local information could be added at the site level. If a province-wide initiative was considered, then space could be left open on a pamphlet for inclusion of this local information.

General Information
- A message from a senior law enforcement officer or government official concerning department policy with respect to crime victims.
- Some expression of empathy with the victim about his/her victimization.
- Recognition that victims deserve consideration through the provision of services.

- An explanation of the duties and the rights of crime victims.
- An explanation of the duties of police departments and courts with respect to victims.
- Some description of national or province-wide victim programs (such as criminal injury compensation programs).

Local Information

- How the pamphlet can be used.
- The telephone number of the police department.
- The name and badge number of the police officer.
- The occurrence number or police case file number.
- The names and telephone numbers of local agencies along with a brief description of their services and appropriate clientele.
- Types of information available from the police department and the courts and how to access that information.
- Descriptions of police procedures (for example, regarding property return, investigation procedures, etc.) to increase understanding and knowledge among crime victims.
- Some information about the court system (e.g., what is expected of witnesses, court location, explanation of court terms, procedures).

The rationale for providing a wide range of information to crime victims is that if they know their rights and the services that are available to them, they will be more likely to follow-up on their needs by contacting the appropriate agency. In other words, (written) information is the mechanism by which crime victims are prompted to take the initiative to gain services for themselves.

Direct Aid

Police officers are not meant to only distribute written information and otherwise remain passive. This program model requires that officers take an active role in insuring that victims understand the information that has been given them, provide some service themselves, and, if necessary, take steps to insure that the individual gains access to other services.

Crime victim needs, particularly at the time of the incident may require personal response on the part of police officers. It is known that many victims do not always personally act on their needs. For example, studies have shown that the services victims often require are often available to them but that they do not always access them. It is unclear whether inaction stems from lack of information, personal reticence on their parts, negative attitudes about the criminal justice system, or that services, while available, are 'practically' difficult to gain. Whatever the case, a program designed to make the system more responsive to the needs of crime victims requires that officers play an active role in service provision.

These services might entail improving their crisis intervention or at-the-scene response, making referrals to community agencies, following-up with clients at some designated time after the incident, or making themselves available for responses to client inquiries at a later date.

1. Crisis Intervention/'At-the-Scene' Services: All police calls do not involve crisis situations, however an officer's response in situations where the complainant is in crisis is critical. What this program requires is that officers focus more sharply on the victims to ensure that their emergency needs are initally taken care of. Officers are trained not only to contain crisis situations and to respond to complaints in ways that are beneficial for investigation and apprehension activities, but also to be aware of and to respond to victim concerns during this time. (This does not entail any reduction in the quality of investigative or apprehension activities.)

It may require that officers call an agency, or someone who is

experienced in crisis management and resolution, or officers may provide crisis intervention services themselves. This does not necessarily entail spending considerably more time at a call, but could involve taking a different approach, or attitude, one that offers more benefits for the victim. It may at times mean that officers takes a hand in mobilizing victims' personal resources (e.g., family). It has often been found that some victims do not need extensive time commitments from officers, but that the way in which the contact time is used is a critical feature. In other words, it is often not what the officer has done in addition to routine actions, but the way in which those activities are handled that is important.

Officers may also be required to take other direct action, including acting as an advocate for the victim with the referral agency or fielding inquiries at a later date.

2. Referrals: As mentioned above, providing information to crime victims about community agencies or services they may need does not ensure that clients will act on the information. At the time of a complaint, victims because of emotional upset may not be in an appropriate frame of mind to follow through on officers' information.

For these reasons, distribution of (pamphlet) information should be accompanied by assistance and explanation to recipients on how it can be used by them, and the initiation of the referral process if it is appropriate. For example, a pamphlet may contain information on a wide variety of subjects, for use by victims of property crime as well as attacks against the person. Officers might point out the sections that are relevant for the particular recipient and explain the content in more detail. When appropriate, officers may also assist crime victims by initiating the referrals procedure. Rather than just giving a telephone number to a client, it might involve the officer in making the first contact and setting up a referral appointment, or putting the client in touch with the 'right person' at a service agency. This last activity may be most appropriate for certain types of clientele (the aged, the young), or victims of certain offenses (domestic violence).

3. Follow-up: This program also requires that some follow-up contact is made by officers to provide further service and/or ensure that the victims' needs have been satisfied. It is known that many of the service requirements victims have are available only through the police department or other parts of the criminal justice system. For example, police case file and prosecution information has been shown to be commonly needed by crime victims. They want to know whether anyone has been apprehended or charged, whether the incident is still being investigated, whether their property has been recovered or what has happened with the court case. This information is available only from the police department or, if there is a charge, may be available from the judicial arm of the criminal justice system.

If information pamphlets are distributed, they will lead to inquiries of this nature and some mechanism must be set up within the department to respond to them. There is hardly any point to informing crime victims that they are entitled to receive information about their cases without ensuring that it can be easily obtained.

It may mean that officers are required to make a follow-up telephone call to all complainants with information about the status of the case investigation. Alternately, it might involve sending out form letters with this information, or setting up a telephone line where inquiries may be answered. (This is established policy in several departments at present.) If this is not possible, then officers will have to make themselves available for victim inquiries. The latter approach can bring with it problems as victims are often frustrated in their attempts to reach officers who spend most of their working time on the street and away from headquarters or area offices. Because of this, some mechanism would need to be set up within the department to respond to victim inquiries.

It is important that crime victims are not to be expected to continually call the department hoping to reach someone willing to dig out the information. Departments may have little control over support services available in the community, but they are capable of making changes in their own jurisdictions to ensure that crime victims receive the services that are only available through them.

1.D. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Although this type of program is meant to be integrated into the normal activities of all police officers, some additional resources will be required especially during the planning and initial implementation phases. In addition, some monitoring should be conducted throughout the program's operational stage. A program coordinator may be designated for these tasks. That person's administrative duties would include -

- articulation of a program plan - its goals and activities,
- development and delivery of a police officer training course,
- pamphlet and program information production.
- institution of a reliable monitoring system, and
- coordination of program activities with community and other criminal justice system agencies.

A program coordinator may also be required to provide some direct victim services to bridge the gap between those provided by officers at the scene of a complaint and those available in the community. For example, the designated employee will probably be asked to provide some police case information. It was envisioned that officers who responded to complaints would provide these services, but because officers may be assigned to varying shifts, victims can have difficulty contacting them and obtaining this information. As a result, an alternative procedure may have to be instituted in police departments to answer victim inquiries. Service activities appropriate for a program coordinator include:

- direct service as required,
- provision of police and court information when this cannot be obtained from police officers,
- coordination of service activities with community service groups.

It should be emphasized that this type of program is one component of comprehensive police-based victim assistance initiatives. It is not meant

to stand alone or to offer the complete range of victim services. In fact, it requires that other services be available in the community or in the police department. This fact requires that some individual be charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the kind of coordination that is thought desirable actually takes place.

A critical part of this support is the designation of a program coordinator to guide the program through its various stages. That individual has an active role to play during program planning and development, during the implementation stage, and throughout its operational period. The program coordinator can undertake the following activities during these periods.

Program planning and development

- Discuss with senior police management how the program will operate in the department.
- Survey community agencies to identify all victim service gaps.
- Set up Advisory council with community agencies who provide victim services
- Identify tangible program objectives and put them into written form.
- Develop police training program.
- Develop written guidelines for police officer activities.
- Schedule program implementation and operation timetable.
- Decide on the contents of printed or pamphlet information.
- Set up program monitoring system.
- Work toward making necessary changes in police department practices and procedures. (This requires the involvement of senior police management.

Implementation period

- Conduct police officer training.
- Ensure that written information (pamphlets) are printed, distributed and made available to all police officers.
- Involve senior management in program introduction.

Operational period

- Maintain contact with community agencies.
- Work towards development of needed services in the community and in other areas of the criminal justice system.
- Monitor program operations to ensure that implementation has taken place and continues.
- Set up mechanism for program evaluation.
- Maintain program visibility within police department and community.
- Provide needed victims services as required.

Because these activities are all necessary elements of a successful program the allocation of specific personnel will be needed, particularly in larger centers and particularly during the first two phases of the program. It is possible in small centers and during the operational phase that there is some reduction in these requirements, as program operations become incorporated into regular policing activities. However, it must be understood that program development and implementation will require staff, time and financial resources.

With this program, service-giving activities are provided by officers in the course of their daily activities and by existing community services. In this way, it does not require extra staff. Additional resources are for support and program development purposes, not to provide service. Notwithstanding, the program coordinators may find that they are in a good position to fill in the service gaps between what officers are able to provide and what is available elsewhere.

1.E. SENIOR POLICE MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Because this program model is new to most areas and because any new initiative requires legitimacy and promotion, it is imperative that senior police personnel be involved in its development and introduction. Their personal endorsement and advocacy of the program are important requisites of success.

Senior police managers are also in a good position to show their support by their willingness to make changes to routine departmental practices and procedures so that clients (crime victims) will be able to easily access and receive the services there. A similar sort of cooperations may be required from representatives of the Crown Prosecutor and Court Clerk's offices making their involvement with the program beneficial.

1.F. OFFICER TRAINING AND INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM

The above-mentioned program and activities represent not a departure from, but an extension of or complement to existing officer activities. Still, considerable ground work and planning is required for successful implementation. It is necessary because some officers will have to adopt a different way of thinking about crime victims before they are likely to begin changing the way that they routinely deal with them. Further, there may be specific procedural changes adopted which require training and information for officers. A major portion of this groundwork includes provision of a training program for police officers to increase their awareness of and improve their responses to the needs of crime victims. Training would include a discussion of the following topics:

Victim Issues and Rights
Victim Needs
Community Service Availability
Criminal Justice System Service Availability
Officer Behaviors

Training is necessary for such a program initiative to be successful, because satisfactory implementation often entails significant

changes in officers' attitudes toward victims, and in their views about what is appropriate behavior when dealing with victims. Behavioral psychologists will attest to the importance of appropriate attitudes to behavioral change. Attitudes are formed and behaviors typified over long periods of time. An officer with 10 years experience handling complaints in a certain fashion is not apt to change them simply on someone else's advice. Officers must be convinced in their own minds that the new behaviors hold some benefits over the old, and must also be instructed about the specific activities that the program requires of them.

This is not to say that all previous behaviors have been inappropriate or lacking sensitivity. On the contrary, police officers have always been primary service givers to crime victims and the experience of many victims give testimony to this. Notwithstanding this fact, the focus of officers' training and activity has always been on investigation and apprehension, and on procedures for dealing with offenders. Little formal recognition has been given the role of the victim in the criminal justice system. What the training seeks to do is to redress that imbalance, to fill in the training gaps about crime victims, and to recognize that the provision of victim services by officers is part of the legitimate repertoire of policing activities.

The development of and provision of police officer training is probably the most difficult, yet the most crucial component of a program such as the one described. It is not sufficient to remind officers at intermittent times that they should be aware of victims' concerns. Information that is expected to have any noticeable impact on officers' attitudes needs to be far more comprehensive. The following outlines areas that would be appropriate content for such a curriculum.

Victim Issues and Rights

Police officers are aware of the attention that has been paid to victim concerns over the past decade. Few would deny that victims should be afforded certain rights, among them fair treatment, information and protection. It is important for a training program to map out the

relationship between abstract rights and tangible services. If victims have rights then there are implications for service givers. Rights assume or demand that they are provided to all citizens, thus services are a necessary corollary to victim rights. Discussion of these issues would need to be included in a victim training course. Commonly-held opinions most of us have about victims and their rights should also be discussed and worked through to the point where they can be operationalized into a set of services that are available to all.

Many recommendations on victim concerns were proposed by the Federal-Provincial Task Force on Victims of Crime. However, experience has shown that only a minority of officers are familiar with its work. Because that Task Force dealt with such a broad range of issues and because the findings of such a body of experts lends credence to the call for more and better victim services, their work may be an effective way to approach this topic. The Task Force also made some recommendations on how the rights of victims should be translated into operational services and some are directly pertinent to officer activities and police departments. A discussion of some of the major areas examined in that report could provide an effective introduction to a training program about improved victim services.

Victim Needs

Lack of services to crime victims has resulted in some part from lack of awareness of their needs. Because officers focus their energies on obtaining evidence and on apprehension activities, sensitivity to victims' needs may not be well developed. However, there are various sources where victims' needs have been identified. Newspapers report victim stories and the effect that criminal victimizations have had on their lives. The 79 recommendations of the Task Force point to victim needs. The federal Ministries of the Solicitor-General and Justice, have also conducted needs assessment studies across Canada. Their reports detail victim needs.

They have told us that crime victims want to be dealt with promptly when they register a complaint, that they want some attention to be paid to their personal security after a criminal incident, that they want to know the

results of a police investigation. They also want to be able to recover their property promptly following its recovery by the police department, and to be able to get needed information from the police officer or police department without problem. Crime victims have also reported that they wish to be informed about community services that might alleviate the impact of a crime on them, they want to be informed about significant events in the prosecution of cases with which they are involved, to be informed about court procedures and to be told what is expected of them when they are subpoenaed to court.

Some of these are only tangentially related to policing activities, but others have direct implications for police officers and police departments. This is particularly so in the areas of officer behaviors at the scene of the complaint, and the follow-up information needs that victims may have about their cases.

A training curriculum then should discuss needs in general and also detail those to which the program is addressing itself. For example, if service emphasis is on information giving, appropriate behaviors at the scene and improved access to services available in the community and other arms of the criminal justice system. Discussion should include methods for identifying the needs of clients as well as strategies for satisfying them.

It is important to have officers understand and accept that needs are not restricted to some small percentage of the crime victim population - for example, only those who have undergone severe emotional trauma or serious personal injury - but are found in a wide range of victim classifications. True, all needs are not equal in urgency or importance, but they represent a valid concern of each person. The way that crime victims are treated is a reflection of the way that the criminal justice system treats citizens. Individual citizens form their attitudes about the criminal justice system based on their experiences with it.

Services Available in the Community

If a program wishes to increase crime victims' use of existing services in the community, officers will have to be well informed about their

availability and about the way referrals are made to them.

Officers often complain that they cannot keep abreast of or are not made aware of all the services available in their own communities. In large centres, listings of social services may fill a book, but even in rural areas officers may not be aware of the full range of services that can be offered by agencies well-known to them. Often agencies are mandated to provide a particular service but because of its infrequency, the service is unknown to police officers.

It is important not to assume that officers know about available services. Services should be listed and discussed. They can be grouped together into types - advocacy groups, medical services, legal services, counselling services or according to the classification of crime victim that may require them, for example, families of homicide victims or sexual assault victims. Whatever is most appropriate, the list must be comprehensive. Written resource materials that can be given to officers and kept by them are a definite asset. This may be plasticized card or sheet that is presented in such a way that it can be kept in patrol cars or with officers' notebooks.

One technique that can be used to reinforce information about agencies to officers is to analyze various hypothetical victim scenarios. Officers could then choose agencies that might be appropriately utilized and discussion can take place about agencies and services at a very practical and useful level. This kind of technique gives meaning to the written material that is provided for them. Obviously, only limited space is available in a pamphlet and services can only be briefly mentioned and described. Others may not be mentioned at all because only the most frequently needed services are likely to be included.

Another technique and one that will offer variety in the training sessions is to invite representatives from various services to make presentations. This will provide officers with first-hand information about the agency and may improve retention of the information given. If this approach is taken, be sure to have guests provide the information in the way that it is required by officers and ask that they discuss some examples where

the agency has assisted crime victims. Representatives should also outline how referrals should be made to the agency.

Services Available From the Criminal Justice System

Services to crime victims are not necessarily provided by community agencies. Police departments and other arms of the criminal justice system are capable of satisfying many requests. Information from these agencies are consistently shown to be the most frequent victim service need. Information requests will include the status of the case investigation, whether property has been recovered, how property can be claimed, whether anyone has been charged, whether anyone has been tried and/or convicted, questions about the prosecution of cases, information about victim/witness court appearances, etc. Yet often, only counselling services, sexual assault services, etc. come to mind when victim services are mentioned. The services that are available within the criminal justice system, including the police department, should be elaborated, and the following questions answered.

What can victims expect in the way of service and information from existing police department operations?

What can be expected in the way of service and information from the court clerk's office, the crown attorney's office?

How do victims access these services?

What kind of treatment can they expect to receive?

Who is eligible to receive service and under what conditions? (including age, income criteria, etc.)

When are services offered? (hours of operation)

How are the services provided? (over the phone, personal consultation, at agency offices)

Are there any charges or fees?

Is there a waiting list for clients?

> Finally, are these services adequate? What must individual officers do to bring these services up to a minimum level of acceptance?

The training curriculum needs to reinforce that these are legitimate service needs of victims and that officers are required to go some way towards ensuring that they are met. It should always be kept in mind that though these services are usually available, victims often have difficulty obtaining them because they may not have all the information necessary to locate a file, or they may have difficulty reaching the right person whose job it is to provide that information.

Officer Behaviors

An important component of the training program would include instructions concerning the behaviors officers are expected to exhibit and the direct services they are required to provide. These may be broken down into several types.

At-the-scene response: Behavior training may focus on appropriate responses at the scene of a complaint. An important element of this training would be techniques for crisis intervention, mediation and resolution. Because officers' training focuses mainly on investigation, control and apprehension skills, they may not have developed appropriate crisis intervention techniques which take into account the requirements of the crime victim.

What is required is the development of techniques and skills which result in the officer, not only restoring equilibrium, but also maximizing the benefit of his (her) intervention. There are tactics which can be learned to improve intervention techniques and they are appropriate content for a victim service training course. It should be realized that comprehensive crisis management courses are lengthy and may not be possible. Some thought may be given to training selected officers for this intensive course. They could then be called on in crisis situations. Alternately, a community group may be willing to undertake this work.

The vast majority of situations to which officers respond are not of the crisis type, and this program requires that officers enhance their awareness of victim concerns in these cases as well. Appropriate behaviors for different classifications of victims and for the various situations encountered should be discussed. They include spouse abuse victims, sexual assault victims, families of homicide victims, child victims, property crime victims, victims whose 'cases' go to court, subpoenaed victims, assault victims and elderly victims.

Information Giving: Instruction should also be given on the type of information that is appropriate for officers to give and what crime victims can expect from the officer and/or the police department. The role of the pamphlet or printed information should be explained. Information would no doubt include explanation of written information, responses to victims' inquiries about their own cases, and assistance in obtaining information about the prosecution of cases. Particular emphasis would need to be given procedures to be followed in regarding officer follow-up of cases. If they are expected to do it, then this must be clearly spelled out.

Referrals: Some consideration has to be given to the appropriateness of referrals in various cases. If referrals are expected, then the referral procedure must be spelled out. Does offering a telephone number or address constitute a referral or does it require that police officers take a more active role? These issues must be clarified. Another issue concerns the referral mechanisms that are used with each agency. Is there a certain person who must be contacted? Is a written application necessary? Does the client need to be 'referred' or 'introduced' by the peace officer or another professional? If officers are aware of these considerations, they will not run into problems and this will result in more positive attitudes toward the agencies and more referrals.

Follow-up Services by Officers: There must be some firm guidelines about the extent that officers are expected to personally follow-up on complainants' requirements. This applies most particularly to their need for information. Officers may be required to follow-up on all cases by providing up-dated information on case investigation or charging information, or some

departmental system should be established whereby victims can obtain this easily from the police department. Within the judical system, officers may find that they have to go some way toward providing court information if no efficient system already operates. Otherwise, it will be necessary to promote the establishment of such a system within that area.

II. CASE STUDIES

The following section presents examples of the various ways that a program similar to the model described above have been implemented in police departments. It includes a description of the evolution and planning of the program by the various funding agencies and participating police departments as well as descriptions of program operations at each site.

Programs at each site were components of a larger victim assistance project (VAP) which was initiated at provincial and federal levels. That larger program also included the establishment at other sites of services for court witnesses. The VAP as one thrust of this larger initiative was implemented at 5 sites. Funding for the project was obtained from the federal ministries of Justice and the Solicitor-General, and from provincial Attorney-General and Solicitor-General Ministries. While this was a Federal/Provincial cost share project, administrators at the provincial level were responsible for determining program sites, program planning and assisting individual police departments implement the program at each site. Federal responsibility included program evaluation, cost of program development and implementation at all sites was approximately $38,000.

The case studies represent variations of how a victim program that attempts to upgrade the level of service by all police officers (the generalist approach) may be enacted. Not all sites attempted to address the full spectrum of victim needs, but all followed the general model of having police officers become more involved with the victim in the course of their daily policing activities. Each case study details the history of the police department's involvement with the program, activities that were undertaken, and the issues that arose as a result of the program initiative. Each site had its own unique community and police environment, was faced with different problems and had varying amounts of resources at its disposal. As a result, programs differed at each site. Some locations were successful in implementing the program while others were less so. The case studies describe both situations because the problems encountered are important and prospective program administrators may learn from these experiences.

Program History and Development

The victim assistance project (VAP) was one component of a larger victim service initiative which included the development of court services. It was a federal-provincial cost share program funded jointly by provincial ministries of the Solicitor-General and Attorney-General, and the federal departments of Justice and the Solicitor-General. The VAP was to be piloted in 4 (later, 5) sites over a 2-year period.

The purpose of the project as stated in program documents was to assist in making the criminal justice process "more reponsive to the needs of the crime victim". The VAP program goal was to provide crime victims with information that would allow them to learn about the services that were available to them, and to easily access these services. For their part, police officers were to distribute and explain information pamphlets to crime victims and to play an active role in assisting victims to access and receive needed services. They were also to provide some direct services as required. Police officers were to receive training about victim concerns and about service availability in their own community.

Four strategies were adopted to achieve this goal:

1. The development of a victim information pamphlet for distribution by police officers at the time that they responded to complaints.

2. The development of guidelines by the provincial police commission. The guidelines were meant to reinforce concern for the victim as a matter of duty and procedure for all police officers.

3. The development and implementation of a training program for police officers to increase their awareness, to improve their response to the needs of the crime victim, to instruct them on pamphlet distribution and the services they would be required to provide.

4. Evaluation of the project in terms of its objectives and against a control group.

These strategies, taken together, were ultimately to result in better informed and served crime victims, who accessed both community and criminal justice-based services that were needed by them.

The provincial police commission played an important role in locating the appropriate departments to undertake the VAP project and in the planning and development of the program. Their representatives approached the Chiefs of Police in each area to obtain their support for the program. They also played the important role of consulting with individual representatives about the program and discussions with them the ways it could be implemented in their areas. Police department representatives indicated that they would arrange for program implementation by their departments, but voiced concern that the VAP should not result in any expenditure by them, and that it be implemented without creating new staff positions. The funding agencies assured them that this would be the case.

Several meetings were organized and representatives of all involved parties were present. Various planning and development issues were discussed during these meetings - as summarized below.

The Pamphlet

The form and content of the pamphlet were discussed in detail. Costs related to its design, writing and printing were to be borne by the funders.

At planning and development meetings, participants were given an opportunity to comment on and edit the contents of the pamphlet, which they did. It was decided that the basic content of the pamphlet would be uniform for all sites, that each site would be able to 'customize' the section of the pamphlet which listed the names and telephone numbers of community agencies that might be helpful for crime victims receiving the pamphlet. To customize the pamphlet for local consumption, space was left for the addition of other community agencies' names and telephone numbers, and for police information. It was left to the discretion of the local group to decide which agencies and local information would be added.

The pamphlet itself underwent detailed editing by the planning group. Before publication, the pamphlet was submitted to each participant for approval. A French version of the pamphlet was also developed.

The pamphlet included:

- an introduction by the Solicitor-General of the province;
- a brief discussion of the victim's role in an investigation, and the necessity of victim co-operation;
- a brief discussion of the right of individuals to enquire about and to receive information about their cases;
- a brief description of the purpose of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, its purpose and eligibility criteria;
- a space for the name and badge number of the investigating officer, along with the police force telephone number and the occurrence or case number; and
- a listing of area services that might be needed by the recipients.

During the same time, guidelines were developed by the provincial police commission to assist the police forces. These guidelines were meant to be used by individual departments in the development of their own victim training programs, and to support the introduction of the program. They were distributed to participating departments and were preceded by an open letter from the Chairman of the police commission in which police officers were encouraged to show their awareness of and concern for victims' needs by adopting the program.

The guidelines themselves aquainted the members of forces with the purpose of the project and their expected activities. Guidelines emphasized that, because police officers were the first (and often the only) contact crime victims had with the criminal justice system, their attitudes and subsequent actions were crucial. It explained when and why the pamphlet should be given out, and the initiatives officers should take in helping crime victims reach existing community services. It also detailed the types of

assistance and information that officers should be prepared to give the victim, including pertinent police case information, basic criminal justice system information, etc.

Guidelines were distributed to the participating forces to be used at their discretion.

Police Training

Training of police officers (not only in the use of pamphlets, but also about victims' rights and concerns, about their needs, about ways to handle cases with sensitivity to crime victims, about the services they would be required to offer and about the local social service agencies that might be appropriate for victims) was considered by program initiators to be an integral part of the VAP program. It was thought that without such information and training, officers might not be convinced of the importance of the program or might not be inclined to distribute the pamphlets and implement the program. In fact, the distribution of pamphlets was considered to be only one manifestation of an enhanced service to crime victims that would result from officer training and from their improved knowledge of community services. Officers were also expected to increase their own level of service giving in their daily activities.

Because in-service training varied among forces, it was decided that each force would determine how best to instruct its line officers and get their support for the project. Police commission guidelines were to be used as a resource and a help to departments in setting up these training programs. Police officer training and introduction of pamphlets was thus left to individual forces, but funder representatives were available to assist them in the introduction of the pamphlet and in some training activities.

Each force was also responsible for assigning a coordinator or liaison officer to look after the project and provide liaison with the co-ordination and research aspects of the project.

Several other issues were discussed at the planning stage of the program. Among these were -

- how guidelines were to be used at the local level;
- anticipated problems in implementing the program at the officer level;
- the amount of time that officers could be expected to spend with the victims;
- the role of the Crown Attorney's office;
- the existence of other victim-related pamphlets that officers currently used;
- the possibility that there were service gaps in individual communities and how this would impact on the program.

COORDINATION WITH LOCAL AGENCIES

Pamphlets were customized at the local level by inclusion of the names and telephone numbers of the area agencies that provided victim services. It was left to the individual department to identify these agencies and to coordinate activities and referrals with them. Program funders were responsible for costs related to printing this information on the pamphlets.

Essentially this identification and coordination involved gaining approval from agencies to have their names printed on the pamphlet, alerting them that crime victims would be made aware of their services, and gaining their assurance that service requests would be acted upon.

Program Evaluation

The police forces involved were asked to maintain some kind of record of the number of pamphlets distributed and the parties to which they were distributed so that future evaluation would have a data base and a sampling frame from which to conduct the research. It was intended that measurement of the overall effectiveness of the program would include impact not only on vicitms, but on other organizations and agencies affected by, but

separate from the VAP operation. The evaluation would also include impact on police officers - their implementation and perceptions of the project.

Briefly, these were the elements that comprised the VAP. Taken together, they represented a technique for improving services to crime victims by having police officers, in the normal course of their duties, upgrade their level of service to victims. It was reasoned that police officer training would be required to accomplish this including needs identification, sensitivity to need, service techniques and knowledge of existing community services. The activities and attitudes that would result from this training, together with pamphlet distribution, would represent improved services to victims.

2.A. CASE STUDY A

Site A became involved with the Victim Assistance Program (VAP) program at the request of a provincial police commission representative. With its existing crisis intervention team and the training most officers have already received in crisis intervention and victim services, this site has a strong tradition of service to crime victims and to those in need of immediate assistance. The VAP was seen as complementary to existing services and a program that could be readily integrated into department routine. The population of the community is approximately 231,000.

The police department's Deputy Chief was involved in program planning and development from its early stages. He also participated in discussions about and collaborated with others in the design and content of the pamphlet that was to be distributed by police officers. The content of the pamphlet was felt by him to be appropriate from the point of view of the police force, considering the availability of services in that city.

Based on experience at this site, it was well understood that police officers' understanding and acceptance of the rationale and need to distribute

the pamphlet was necessary. This department was in the envied position of having trained all their police officers in crisis intervention techniques and officers were already knowledgeable about victim needs, community resources for victims, etc.

For example, officers carried with them a listing of a number of community agencies. This was kept in patrol cars for easy reference. In short, it was felt that normal police procedures already satisfied many of the requirements of this program and that it would be a relatively small step to introduce pamphlet use.

The Deputy Chief decided that he would personally coordinate the introduction of the program to ensure that successful implementation was achieved. To this end, he attended Sergeants meetings to inform them about the program and to alert them to the fact that they would be responsible for seeing that their men implemented it. In the fall of 1983, the Chief of Police issued a memo instructing officers to take appropriate steps to ensure that victims accessed the services they needed and to distribute the pamphlet. The memo contained the following:

1. A message from the Chairman of the provincial police commission which highlighted the concern that crime victims receive needed care, and which asked officers for their support to make the program work.

2. A reprint of provincial police commission guidelines with respect to the treatment of crime victims.

3. A short description of the VAP and the reason for its initiation.

4. Instructions to police officers on the use of the pamphlets, for example, when it should be used, what other services should accompany the distribution of pamphlets, instructions for officers on the extent of information and other follow-up that should be provided to victims in addition to pamphlet distribution, and instructions for recording these activities in the occurrence report so that information could be assembled at a future date.

This detailed memo was seen to be important for successful program implementation because it provided police officers with a rationale for co-operating with the program and an understanding of the purpose behind it. It was felt that officers who were unconvinced of the value of the program would not be inclined to be involved in it. Thus careful attention was given to discussion of the aims of the program. The memo also pointed out very specific ways that officers could be of help to victims in their regular day-to-day activities. In this, the guidelines provided by the provincial police commission were very useful.

Further, it was felt that officers should be made aware that the program had the full support of senior police administration. This was emphasized by the in-depth attention that was paid to the program and the details of implementation in the memo, and also by the fact that it was signed by the Chief of Police. Officers were also made aware that the department was going to keep a count of all cases where the pamphlet had been distributed and where referrals had been made, for future research.

The Sergeants' supervising personnel who were to distribute the pamphlets also contributed to implementation success by attending parades. At this setting, they introduced the pamphlet and discussed its purpose and when distribution would be appropriate. They also used that setting for further discussion and training on victim issues, and to remind officers of the type of treatment and service they themselves should provide to crime victims.

To support program implementation the Deputy Chief also attended Sergeants meetings at later dates to remind Sergeants that their officers should be complying with the program, and later issued another memo to all ranks reminding them to continue their efforts.

A reader in the Records Department was charged with assembling information on the implementation of this program. Officers were instructed to note on the occurrence report when they left a pamphlet with complainants. When these occurrence reports reached the reader, that person recorded the file number in all cases where a pamphlet was left. These were tallied on a monthly basis. In all, over 17 months, 6,108 pamphlets were left

with complainants for an average distribution of 352 per month. No records have been kept since that time, but it is felt that service is being maintained at the same level. (It should be noted that in 1984, 27,900 criminal offenses were reported at this site. The 4,395 pamphlets distributed that year represents 16% of these occurrences.)

Officers were also instructed to note on the occurrence report when they made a referral, along with issuing the pamphlet. In all, 50 - 60 referrals were noted during the 'recorded' time period, and most were made to the department's own crisis intervention team. The extent these activities were accompanied by enhanced police office service or follow-up is not known.

The VAP has been successfully integrated into police department activities at this site. Several reasons may be advanced for this success. One is the department's strong tradition of service to complainants in occurrences to which the police have been called and this program did not interfere with that service, but rather complemented it. Second, officers have received in-depth training in crisis intervention and victims' needs and treatment, and this important part of the program did not require the attention and time it did elsewhere. Third, senior police administrators took an active role in training and seeing that the program was implemented and, because of this, officers were aware that senior administration was behind the program. Taken together, these elements have resulted in successful implementation and maintenance of the program.

2.B. CASE STUDY B

Site B became involved with the Victim Assistance Program in conjunction with their local Salvation Army. This policing region has a population of approximately 500,000.

Senior police administrators were first approached by provincial police commission representatives to participate in the VAP program and during 1982 and 1983 a representative from the police force in Site B participated in

meetings which were held to discuss program viability, planning and implementation. In this capacity, the department representative committed the department to participation and had input into program development, and the content and design of the pamphlet.

Subsequently, the Salvation Army was approached by the police force. They expressed interest in establishing a volunteer service to provide assistance to crime victims who were in need of some service that was otherwise unavailable in the community. This was viewed as a necessary adjunct to the VAP program. If police officers were to be informing crime victims of their rights to services, it would be important to ensure these services existed. It was anticipated that the services would include, among others, repair to property, emotional support or comfort immediately following a (criminal) incident, and support or accompaniment services for victim/witnesses who were required to attend court and give testimony. It was also anticipated that police officers themselves would normally make the request/intervention of this volunteer program on behalf of the victim, but this did not rule out the possibility that crime victims could request service directly from the Salvation Army program, as its telephone number was included on the pamphlet.

Senior management at the regional force selected several programs whose services were felt to be needed by and appropriate for crime victims and which would be included on the pamphlet. They were -

The Salvation Army (special victim program)
Children's Aid Society
Sexual Assault Crisis Centre
Catholic Children's Aid Society
Legal Aid Office
Women's Centre

The support of these community agencies was gained and senior representatives of these groups were invited to attend a meeting at the department's Headquarters to discuss the purpose and mechanics of the project and to request their approval to include their agency names and telephone numbers on the pamphlet. All agencies attended, indicated their support for

the program and also that they would accept referrals that would be made to them by officers or that came directly from crime victims.

A Sergeant from the Community Services Section (Crime Prevention Branch) was appointed the Coordinator of the VAP program. His prime functions were to act as program liaison officer between the department and government funding agencies, to oversee the printing of agency information on the pamphlet, to ensure the pamphlet was (initially) distributed to all appropriate areas, and to later gather information from victims about the impact and usefulness of the pamphlet and the extent to which they accessed the agencies listed.

Due to the considerable size and call load of the geographic area under the jurisdiction of the police force it was decided that the program would operate in only 1 (of 4) districts. This district chosen was primarily a residential community. This area was also to be covered by the new Salvation Army victim program that was developed to go hand-in-hand with the VAP. The Staff Sergeant in this district was directed to ensure that 'street' personnel comply with the program by distributing the pamphlet in appropriate cases. This involved having Sergeants introduce the pamphlets and program to their officers, and ensuring that pamphlets were made readily available to them. The directive that was issued indicated that victims of crime against persons and residential burglaries were appropriate pamphlet recipients.

In addition to this, a Salvation Army program volunteer attended parades in the district selected and addressed all officers. This presentation included some discussion of VAP and some explanation to officers of the kinds of needs that victims might have, and the services that could be provided by the Salvation Army volunteers. In effect, although the Army program was only one of several services listed on the pamphlet, their representatives were more actively involved than any other party in explaining and selling the program to officers.

To facilitate follow-up and evaluation, officers were instructed to enter "P/L" (Pamphlet Left) in the comment area with the name of the Complainant/Victim on the occurrence report. As this information was to be

entered on computer, a later search would be able to identify those cases on which a program assessment could be made. These cases could also form a sampling frame from which an evaluation also be conducted and it allowed the department to determine the level of implementation of the program by officers.

In the fall of 1983, officers began to distribute the pamphlet in the designated area and continued for 6 months when the program was transferred to another patrol area. This change was made because it was felt that there was little response to the program in the former - mainly residential - area. It was thought that the move to the new district with its more varied crime patterns would result in increased program use and more numerous clients who would require services from the listed agencies. This increased usage did not occur.

When these figures were tabulated, it was found that 384 pamphlets were issued in the first 6 months of the program (first location), and 101 were issued in the following 7 months (second location). The first figure in particular does not correspond with the fact that additional pamphlets (over the initial allotment of 1,000) were requested by that district. It is generally thought that officers did not always note on the occurrence report that a pamphlet was left. Also, a victim follow-up questionnaire indicated that victims did not always recall receiving a pamphlet where the "P/L" was indicated on the occurrence report. These facts indicate that it is not possible to judge with any surety the extent of implementaion by officers based on the available data or the extent of other related officer direct or follow-up service activity.

It is felt by those concerned that, initially, officers did indeed comply with the directive to leave pamphlets with victims of crimes against persons and residential burglaries. This was the case when the program operated in its first location and it is indicated by the fact that additional pamphlets were requested in that area. It is unclear however, whether full implementation occurred when the program moved to its second location. This may have been due to the fact that the same introduction and selling effort did not take place at that location. In any case, it appears that the program

and pamphlet distribution never got off the ground in the second area.

Six months after program start up the police force conducted an evaluation of the impact of the program. Of the 384 cases (first location) where P/L was indicated, 104 victims were mailed a questionnaire inquiring about their knowledge and use of the program. Only 26 (25%) returned the questionnaire but their responses suggested to the department that the distribution of the pamphlets and information therein did not result in increased victim requests for service. They did, however, note that they appreciated having officers' names, telephone numbers and the police case number provided for them for future reference.

Later the agencies listed on the pamphlet were contacted and all stated that a minimal number of calls were received as a result of the program and the distributed pamphlets. Further, the Salvation Army program reported that in 7 months, pamphlet distribution and police referrals resulted in only 5 calls and, of these, only 1 required response. Based on the above, it was decided that the department would terminate its involvement with the Victim Assistance Project.

2.C. CASE STUDY C

In addition to participation in the Victim Assistance Project, this regional police force also hosts an established victim program which was formed in 1980. This specialty program attached to the Community Relations Branch of the force, is staffed by civilians. Its purpose is to serve crime victims through counselling, referral or information-giving services. Staff also devote some time to police officer training about victim issues. The pilot Victim Assistance Project (VAP) then, came as an additional service that would be provided by officers to crime victims. It was decided that the VAP would be coordinated by the Community Relations Branch and that specialist unit staff would be involved in police training and act as program liaison. The population served by this regional force is approximately 310,000.

Senior members of this police force attended the planning and development meetings held in 1982/3, and committed the regional force to involvement in it. They also commented on and gave their approval to the design and content of the pamphlet.

Because a victim program was already in operation in this area, it was decided that instead of listing area agencies and their telephone numbers in the space provided, that the department's own victim program would be the only agency listed, and all requests for assistance would be channeled through them. In this way, the specialist program could use their existing network of referral agencies to ensure that victims received required services. Because of this, the VAP program was coordinated through the Community Relations branch, and the members of that section, along with the specialist staff, initially introduced the pamphlet and also conducted the necessary training sessions.

Dissemination of the pamphlets was handled by Divisional Commanders who allocated them to the Staff Sergeants in charge of each platoon. As a result, members of each platoon initially received 4 or 5 pamphlets. More pamphlets were made available at the area where officers write up and file occurrence reports. (All department forms are stored in this area, including a variety of other pamphlets.)

The commanding officer of the Community Relations Branch and the Co-ordinator of the victim program together attended training days (held every Wednesday) to introduce the pamphlet and to address other victim-related issues - notably, family violence calls. It is estimated that all sworn personnel were reached through this forum, with the exception of detectives. Officers were instructed to distribute pamphlets to all victims of residential housebreakings, family violence, and any other serious crimes. Previously, officers had the option of issuing a blue, business-sized card to these same parties (this card provided the victim program telephone number and briefly listed program services provided on the back), or could give the complainants a beige VSU pamphlet that briefly described the specialist program, community agencies, and the services they provided. Further, after occurrences, form letters were sent to designated crime victims to explain the service. With

the advent of VAP, these practices were to be replaced by the distribution of the blue VAP pamphlet.

Presentations made to officers included introduction of the pamphlet and instructions on its use as well as some discussion of other victim issues. Generally, this discussion focused on family violence and the ways that the program could be helpful to the officers and the parties involved in these situations.

In the fall of 1983, Policy and Standing Orders were issued by the Chief of Police. They instructed officers to begin distributing the blue pamphlets and to indicate on them the officers' names and badge numbers, and the police telephone number where they could be reached. Officers were also instructed to tell victims to call the specialist program for further assistance. Distribution of pamphlets was to be indicated on the occurrence report. (Later, when it appeared that this was not being included on the occurrence report, further orders were issued instructing officers to include the notation "P/L" (pamphlet left) on the report so that there would be some indication of program implementation. Over the subsequent 3 months, a tally revealed that 19 occurrence reports were marked with "P/L".)

It appears that there was resistance to the idea of pamphlet distribution for several reasons. First, officers had previously been issuing other pamphlets which contained a list of area service agencies that could be of help to crime victims. One of these earlier-developed pamphlets contained not only this listing, but a brief description of the kind of services one might expect to receive from the agencies and types of clients that would be appropriate. Thus, it contained some information the VAP pamphlet did not. Officers also had a further option of distributing a business-sized card. This was the more popular response by officers.

Second, the size and bulk of the pamphlet did not lend itself to officer use. Informants indicated that other than the pamphlet mentioned above, officers also had several others that they were encouraged to distribute, including crime prevention and other agencies' pamphlets. Because pamphlets were left in police cars, it meant that officers, at the conclusion

of their calls, would have to return to cars to get the pamphlets and then bring them to the recipient; and this was not always possible given time constraints. A business-sized card which could be attached to an officer's notebook would always be preferred.

Third, officers were reluctant to provide their names and badge numbers on the front of the pamphlet where space was provided. There was also some reluctance to provide the occurrence number as this too might entail an extra trip to the car radio to get it, and then a return to the victim. The reluctance to provide the victim with the officer's name was based on their preference for anonymity, concern that some victims would constantly make requests of them, and/or concern for their personal or family's safety.

The fourth reason officers were reluctant to distribute pamphlets was the prior existence of a victim program which was already providing both an outreach and re-active service for crime victims. This program was also acting as a clearinghouse for referring victims to other agencies. Officers did not see the distribution of this new pamphlet as offering anything new or improved over existing services.

A further point was that the introduction of the pamphlet was accompanied by in-service training that focused mainly on domestic violence cases. It is possible that officers came to think of distribution of the pamphlet mainly in cases of domestic violence because it was the featured topic on the training days when the pamphlet was also introduced.

There was also some confusion in the officers' minds that this pamphlet program somehow replaced the existing victim program and this gave cause for concern that it might result in some negative effects for that program.

As a result of these concerns, it is generally felt that pamphlets did not receive wide distribution as originally planned. Police officers reported that they did distribute some pamphlets, but exact numbers are unknown and there is some confusion about which pamphlets were used.

For the above-stated reasons, pamphlet distribution and the VAP program has not continued at this site. Although no instructions or orders were given to discontinue their use, it appears that they have fallen into disuse.

2.D. CASE STUDY D

Site D has a community population of approximately 43,000. Initially its police department was interested in participating in the Victim Assistance Project. Its Chief of Police attended planning meetings with other police administrators to discuss and plan the proposed project and to decide how it should best be implemented in the four selected jurisdictions. However, the VAP program never entered the implementation stage at this site.

The Chief of Police has indicated that he was, and is, in full philosophical agreement with the goals of the project and the methods by which they would be achieved. It was the Chief of Police's opinion that this project was not intended solely to provide information of a follow-up nature, but that its success would require some enhancement of the services available from officers, through the police department, and other community agencies.

Because of this, he felt it would be necessary to allocate or hire sworn or other personnel to coordinate the effort. That person's job description would include the development of a training program for police officers, delivery of the training to all officers, establishment of contacts and co-ordination mechanisms with social service agencies, pamphlet control and, very importantly, the establishment of a volunteer program to offer services required by crime victims, presently unavailable in the community. The volunteer program was considered a necessary component of the total effort and would be most helpful in cases where victimization resulted in some trauma.

Because the Chief and senior police administrators in that department felt that training police officers about victim services, distributing the pamphlet, and alerting area citizens to their rights to

services presumed that an infrastructure of services did exist, it was decided that distribution of the pamphlet would be inappropriate until these services could be established.

To this end, police administration went to their Police Commisssion to request that manpower, financial and space resources be allocated for this effort. This was refused by them for fiscal reasons. Since that time, this program has remained dormant at this site, and the pamphlets have been re-distributed to other centres operating this pilot project.

It is the Chief of Police's view that this program has merit and that it is an important first step in providing victim services. However, he also feels that such a program requires the establishment at that site of some complementary services in order for the primary goals of increased victim participation in the criminal justice system and in their access to needed services to be achieved. Also, police officer training and sensitivity to victims' needs would be a prerequisite and a crucial underpinning for the success of the program as a whole. The Chief's view is that this training should start early, ideally at the police college recruit training level.

2.E. CASE STUDY E

Site E became involved with the Victim Assistance Project in early 1985. Participation at this location resulted from the withdrawal of another site from the program. Because of this, police commission representatives approached senior police management from this site to ascertain whether they would be interested in adopting the VAP. The city's population size (approximately 47,000) made the location attractive as program developers had wished to pilot the program in a medium-sized community.

At the same time, senior police administrators at this location were considering the establishment of its own victim program. Only general plans had been formulated for this independent program, but when the department was approached by the funders it was decided that involvement in the VAP program would satisfy many of the features and objectives that an independent program

might encompass.

Representatives of this police force did not have any part in or input into program development or the content of the pamphlet. This was conducted earlier on before involvement of this site. Nonetheless, the force was content that existing VAP goals and activities were consistent with their aims and could be successfully adopted in that community.

In late 1984 and early 1985, representatives of the funding agencies visited the site to explain the VAP, its rationale, goals and activities to senior police management and potential program administrators. Because this group had the benefit of experience in four other sites, considerable emphasis was placed on such areas as training of police officers in victim issues and services, and in methods of introducing the program. It was felt that the VAP had not been as successfully implemented as hoped in all locations partly because sufficient planning had not been given these important program components.

Representatives of the funding agencies also developed a guide for program implementation which they provided for the police force. This guide included discussion of the following areas:

- commitment of critical senior personnel,
- program operation,
- liaison officer duties,
- police officer training program,
- inter-agency coordination, and
- evaluation and reporting requirements.

The VAP was coordinated from the Community Services Branch. An officer was assigned as liaison between the program, the police department, community service groups and funding agencies. He also personally provided service to crime victims when requested either directly by clients or through police officers.

Program introduction took place over a period of time. Early in 1985, all officers received 1/2 day formal training about victim issues and

VAP introduction. This formed part of the regular in-service training day which takes place four times yearly. All officers are required to attend these training sessions.

Training sessions were conducted by representatives of the police force and the provincial police commission. They focused on the following areas:

1. Discussion of victim concerns and the reality of crime victims.

2. Video cassette presentations which portrayed how police officers may inadvertantly, because of customary procedures, not act in crime victims' interests or may not be sensitive to their needs. There were three video cassettes shown, each concentrating on one type of victim - the housebreaking victim, the sexual assault victim and the elderly victim. Each cassette portrayed 'customary' and 'improved' ways to deal with victims and discussion accompanied each tape. The tapes showed that improved attention to victim needs could be practically applied in officers' day-to-day activities.

3. Introduction of the VAP, including its rationale, goals, content of administrative directive.

4. Directions for officer implementation of the program including instructions on pamphlet distribution, the kinds of victims to whom the pamphlets would be distributed (all victims of violent crime and property loss - except commercial crime or relatively minor cases), the services officers were expected to provide for recipients, information about community social service agencies, and referral methods.

Two months later, an Administrative Directive was distributed to all members of the police department. This directive alerted personnel that the VAP was to be implemented on April 1st. It was signed by the Deputy Chief. The major focus of the memo dealt with program rationale and goals in an attempt to orient officers' thinking toward program acceptance. The directive contained information about:

- aims of the program,

- major function of the program,
- major concerns of the program,
- the intended role and activities of police officers,
- a message from the provincial police commission Chairman calling for compassion for crime victims,
- provincial police commission guidelines for police activities with respect to victims, and
- the date of program implementation.

During this time, the police force also made contact with social service agencies in the area. The intent of this was to assemble information on available services, to identify service gaps, to establish a workable referral mechanism between all concerned, and to foster inter-agency co-ordination in the delivery of victim services.

Letters were also sent to area service agencies. The letters informed them of the planned implementation of VAP and asked agencies to detail the services that they provided (either directly or through referral) that could be of use to crime victims. As a result of this information, an officer made personal visits to each agency where crime victim services were provided and a resource directory was developed for distribution to officers. This directory, which was distributed to officers at the in-service training days, listed agencies' names and telephone numbers along with the type of cases (or crises) in which it would be appropriate to call them.

Also as a result of this inventory, several key agencies were invited to a meeting at the police department to discuss the program and to plan inter-agency coordination. This meeting (and a second which was later held) was very helpful in disspelling any fears that agencies might have had that the police department or others were duplicating their own efforts. Liaison persons from each agency were also designated at these meetings so that referral mechanisms could be facilitated and an inter-agency council was also set up. It was decided that this council would meet when program changes occurred or as need dictated.

The survey of agencies identified gaps in services in the community. These were provisions of emergency support to crime victims who suffered trauma or need following victimization and cases where the service time commitment was more extensive than what could reasonably be expected from officers. Other service gaps included court accompaniment and witness management. The VAP staff is currently making arrangements with an external group to offer these services through their volunteers. To date, such services are available during business hours from Monday to Friday.

Officers were instructed to begin implementing the VAP program in the spring of 1985. A press release was also issued at the time announcing the VAP program and this resulted in considerable media coverage.

Officers' roles require them to distribute pamphlets, to spend extra time at the scene providing help and explaining the service, to make referrals for clients (if necessary), and to follow-up on all cases by contacting the victim within a week of the occurrence to ensure that all needs were met. Officers are also instructed to contact the VAP liaison officer in cases where they feel the complainant needed some assistance which they or the designated agencies are unable to provide. This is done in a memo requesting assistance.

It appears that officers are complying with program implementation. They report that they are distributing pamphlets and following-up on cases by a telephone call within a week of the occurrence. Further evidence of this lies in the fact that several memos requesting extra assistance were received by the VAP Coordinator each week (approximately 5 or 6 per week).

Officers have also been instructed to indicate "P/L" on the occurrence report to indicate that a pamphlet has been left with the victim. Although this is being done, there is currently no mechanism to monitor the number of times this occurs on reports. (This police department employs a manual record-keeping system.)

As a result of the VAP, the liaison officer who is located in the Community Service Branch has found that he is personally providing direct

service to crime victims in many cases. This results from memos in which officers request his intervention. While the program's intention was that street personnel were to provide the improved services to crime victims, it appears that smooth operation of the program has required that the designated employee be available to fill service gaps between what is available from the community and what individual police officers are prepared to provide. His service activities are also required because pamphlet recipients who require some police-based service may be unable to reach officers as they normally spend only a small portion of their day in police headquarters. In these cases, the request or inquiry normally goes to the liaison officer. Police officers have also reported that they have been receiving more inquiries and requests from crime victims since the program was initiated.

In summary, the VAP appears to have enjoyed a successful implementation and is continuing to operate in the prescribed manner at this site. This is the view held by all involved parties and has been confirmed by police officers, although monitoring of police reports to determine actual numbers of pamphlets distributed is not possible.

Presently, program administrators are promoting the establishment of an additional community group to fill existing service gaps. One area has been found to be problematic, that of obtaining court information. Not only the public but police officers as well may experience trouble in obtaining court information. While this is an area of concern for those involved with the program, there does not appear to be any solution at this time.

The initial success that this program has experienced has been attributed to several factors. First, the size of the community and police force lended itself to easier implementation in that all officers could be trained in a short space of time and media coverage could cover the entire jurisdiction without problem. Second, it was made apparent to officers that senior police management was behind the program and supported it fully. Third, police officer preparation for the program was systematically approached and training in victim services was detailed and given priority.

2.F. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Implementation of the Victim Assistance Project where it was piloted met with varying degrees of success. The situations and environments with which program planners and administrators were faced varied widely and this played a major role in the degrees of implementation success.

For example, some police departments already operated victim programs and the new service was viewed either as complementary or as an unneeded duplication. The latter situation did not encourage implementation. Further, the extent that police officers had earlier been exposed to victim service training and the type of training received affected ease of implementation. There was also great variety in VAP training techniques. Smaller communities appear to have had an easier time organizing and running the training component of the VAP program. In effect, each site presented an unique environment and, because of this, the VAP experience varied in its operation, administration and achievement.

In discussing the VAP with various police managers and officers charged with administering the program, several issues surfaced. These issues appear to be related to the VAP's program ultimate successful or unsuccessful implementation and operation and are discussed below.

1. The Program - Its Rationale and Expectations

Briefly, the VAP program was meant to acquaint crime victims with some services available to them and, through the pamphlet, to provide them with information so that they could access the services they needed. Officers were also intended to pay closer attention to complainants' needs, provide services, and to take an active role in ensuring that victims accessed appropriate services. Officer sensitivity to victim concerns and to service availability was to be enhanced through in-service training. In effect, officer actions and the pamphlet information were to be the linking mechanism between victims and services.

Appropriate officer attitude, enhanced victim sensitivity, and increased knowledge about area services were all seen as integral to this program. It was recognized by program planners that these were necessary pre-requisites to program success. Notwithstanding, many officers' experiences with the program were limited to introduction of the pamphlet, with a short pitch about its appropriateness and its distribution to specific target groups. With the exception of a few sites, officers received little or no specific training in victim care and did not perceive a need to follow-up on the distribution of pamphlets by recontacting victims to ensure that they had received needed services, or by increasing their own level of service. In short, in some areas, the VAP program from officers' perspectives consisted of pamphlet distribution alone.

As a result of this perception, some officers questioned the value of the program. Many felt that few of the people to whom the pamphlets were distributed actually needed the information provided, that a pamphlet did not meet peoples' needs in an appropriate way, that most people did not read pamphlets, and that few people used the pamphlet in the way intended. For these reasons, many officers did not feel there was much value in distributing the pamphlet and that it was an inappropriate demand on officers' time. This resulted in reluctance or disinterest in the VAP program. The view was also expressed by some that the main value of the program/pamphlet lay in a public relations function for police departments.

The distribution of pamphlets and limited police officer training does not constitute all components of the VAP although this was frequently thought to be the case. Of equal importance was the institution of better techniques for officers in dealing with victims, officer follow-up with victims and improved coordination with community agencies. These components were not always emphasized or fully understood by all program participants.

2. Content of the Pamphlet

The pamphlet developed for this program was divided into 2 sections. The first section contained:

- An introduction from a senior law enforcement officer.
- Text on the responsibilities of crime victims (e.g., to assist in the case investigation, to respond to officers' inquiries, to appear in court when required).
- Information on some broadly-based services (e.g., criminal injuries compensation) with an urging to contact available community agencies when required.

The second section of the pamphlet was customized at each site to include a listing of services that were available in that community. Generally, province-wide agencies and the local sexual assault crisis centre were listed, with space left open for their area telephone numbers. In addition, provision was made on the front of the pamphlet for officers to write their names and badge numbers as well as the police force telephone number and occurrence (or case) number.

There was general agreement that the first section of the pamphlet contained worthwhile information for crime victims, but that some of it was applicable in only a small percentage of cases. It was felt that many people did not know about the criminal injuries compensation and would benefit from that information.

With respect to the second section, some concerns were voiced about the listing of agencies in each community. As mentioned above, at all sites but one, the name of 3 province-wide agencies were pre-printed on the brochure. Each department then used the additional available space to list further services. Some officers and managers felt that some of the agencies mentioned were not always the one most or frequently needed by crime victims. For example, police case information and court information (scheduling, dates, dispositons) have been consistently found to be victim service needs. To provide the police department telephone number does not completely satisfy that need. In addition, not all sites provided telephone numbers where such information might be obtained and, in many cases, police officers' names and badge numbers were not written on the pamphlet cover. In most cases, no procedural changes were made within the department to allow crime victims to easily access police case information and inquirers were

faced with the same problems as previously. At only one site was there a telephone number given for those wishing court information.

Further, a social service group with religious orientation was listed on the pamphlet, yet all crime victims may not know that this organization provides service to crime victims, assuming that their services concentrate on the offender. Similarly, the name "Sexual Assault Crisis Centre" might confuse pamphlet recipients if they are known by different names in each city.

The suggestion was made that the names of each agency should be followed by a brief description of the services available there, because solely providing a name could confuse the recipient and thus reduce the pamphlet's usefulness. In fact, one site was already using a pamphlet with contained such descriptions. It was thought to be more useful to victims and this fact contributed to officers' failure to use the VAP pamphlet there.

Based on this information, it would seem that a review of the information included in the pamphlet and the method of its presentation could be made to determine whether salient, needed and understandable information is provided at the site level.

3. Availability of Support Services

The perceived availability of services on which victims could call was a crucial determinant of program implementation at one site in particular. If a pamphlet alerts citizens to their rights to service by the community, the police department and the judicial arm of the criminal justice system, an adequate level of service must, in fact, exist. This was not felt to be the case at one site and the VAP was subsequently put on hold until these services could be established.

For example, the pamphlet informs recipients that information and assistance is available to them from the police department and suggests they have a right to obtain information on court proceedings with which they are involved. This information is only of value to recipients if mechanisms are

made available for that information to be easily accessed by them. Although available, victims often have difficulty in obtaining such information. It may be that this kind of information on a pamphlet requires some changes to existing procedures. Whether this is achieved by upgrading the existing level of service or by some procedural change is up to individual departments, but it appears to be a necessary corollary to pamphlet distribution.

Similarly, most sites selected for listing several community services, among them, legal aid services and women's shelters. Not all of these were available, particularly in small or rural communities. As a result, the institution of a program such as the VAP may require that police administrators take the initiative in promoting the development of such services or it may mean that an additional position be added in the department to provide the service. These are not easy tasks and may ultimately require fiscal expenditure on their part. As an example, one site felt it was necessary to promote the development of a community-based 'victim' program to provide immediately-needed services. This site would not have implemented the VAP without this complementary service. At another site, the police force has been very active in promoting the establishment of a volunteer group to provide court accompaniment and emotional support services for victims. In any case, program planners should be acutely aware of service availability in their communities, how victims can access them, and what clients should realistically expect from others. These factors should be taken into account in the listing of services.

At the same time, when a program is thought to duplicate existing services, it will not be well received. For example, one site already had a victim program whose job it was to provide direct service and/or link up the client with a service that was available in the community. In addition, officers had previously been provided with pamphlets which described these services. This duplication of service appeared to be one reason for reluctance by officers to implement the "new" VAP program.

4. Officer Training and Introduction to Program

The quality and type of training officers received in victim issues and service delivery appeared to be related to successful and continued implementation. Unless officers received proper preparation and introduction to the program and were predisposed toward acceptance of it, implementation was problematic.

Previous levels of 'victim' training and the type of training received for the program differed widely among the sites. In one case, almost all police officers had previously received 2 weeks of intensive training in crisis intervention techniques. They had also been instructed on the availability of community services. It is said that this police department has a strong tradition of working with social agencies. Officers' training and previous knowledge about community agencies may have made them more receptive to programs of this kind. That training focused on the crisis intervention techniques and was not addressed specifically to crime victims.

On the other hand, at another site, no specific victim training had been given previous to this program, and VAP training and introduction did not allow for comprehensive instruction. There, most training was handled by a representative of the community-based victim program. In another case, introduction of the pamphlet took place at the same time as pre-arranged in-service training sessions on family violence.

A major portion of training time at a further site was spent discussing ways that officers could improve their existing treatment of crime victims. Program introduction and instruction was only one component of the training curriculum. In effect, officer training attempted to illustrate to them the reality of victim needs and the value of improving service so that they would be more disposed toward accepting the VAP. It did not simply introduce the program and provide instructions on pamphlet use.

Police officer training should not be limited to a general pitch about victims' needs and instruction on pamphlet distribution. It should promote the attitude that victim care is a valid, integral part of police work

and should be aimed at reducing the feeling that officers are being asked to perform nuisance work that does not fall strictly within the realm of law-enforcement activities. Attitudes such as this have to be expelled before this program will be fully accepted by line officers. The value of a more generic type of police training lies in the fact that officers' understanding of victim concerns and needs, of victim rights, of community services and of the role officers can play in providing service and helping victims access services may positively dispose them toward implemention of specific victim programs.

VAP planners anticipated that training would be a most important pre-requisite for the VAP as the thrust of the program was to enhance police officers service to crime victims, the pamphlet being one manifestation of that improved service. However, training methods and training responsiblity was left to individual departments. The VAP budget included only a nominal amount for training aids and this seriously limited the extent that funders could assist departments to develop training packages or provide training packages for them. At the same time, police departments understood that they would not incur any costs over the implementation of the program. As a result, they did not envision and were not in a position to develop in-depth training programs. Given this situation, the extent of training that could reasonably be given by them was pamphlet introduction, summaries of program rationale, memos, etc. Instruction usually took place at roll call and parades and was brief. This was supplemented by senior administrators' reminders to supervisors to ensure that their officers were using the pamphlet, etc. These activities does not appear to be sufficient for successful program implementation and operation.

5. Organizational Support Within the Police Department

One feature that seemed to promote successful implementation of the VAP program was the existence or the establishment of an infra-structure within the police department that facilitated the provision of victim services. This took different forms at the various sites. For example, in one site, a crime prevention officer was designated as liaison person to ensure that crime victims reached the community groups whose services they

required. That person also provided direct service (mainly police case information) and followed-up on cases when required. In another site, their existing crisis intervention team was instrumental in ensuring that appropriate victims accessed community services. In this case, their existing network of contacts and referrals mechanisms were helpful.

It may be that a program such as the VAP requires some such support services or mechanisms to bridge the gap between the immediate intervention by the responding officer and the services in the community. This may take the form of a group or individual that specializes in victim care, or an information depot where case information can be obtained. It is unlikely that this type of program will be successful without the help of a trained coordinator and some specific changes to the ways that citizens access and receive services. For example, a designated employee is probably required to provide some police case information. While it was envisioned that officers would provide this, it became obvious that because of shift schedules, etc. victims would have problems obtaining this information. Programs at most sites did not alter their practices for obtaining information. Telling victims that they have a right to obtain information necessitates that it can be easily accessed.

It may also be preferable that this position or group is located within the police department. The experience at one site indicated a reluctance by police officers to utilize independent external groups set up for this purpose. Until such time as the interaction between individual officers and community services becomes more customary and accepted, an internal position or group can be a valuable program asset.

Other activities that could be undertaken by the incumbent of that position could include,

- promotion, publicity, monitoring and evaluation of the program within the department,
- provision of direct service as required,
- provision of police and court information when this cannot be obtained from police officers, and

- coordination of activities with community service groups.

6. Senior Police Management Support

One factor in the acceptance of any new program is the strength of senior management's commitment to it and persistence in seeing that it is implemented. That commitment must be demonstrated and visible to others. It is often the case that while commitment exists, it is not translated into actions which make this clear to others. Therefore, the actions, or perceived lack of them, by those in authority can have important repercussions at the field level.

All senior administrators who were involved at the planning and development stages expressed their support of the program. The approaches taken to implement it in each department varied considerably as did the role assumed by senior administrators. In all departments, standing orders, or a memo from the Chief accompanied the introduction of the pamphlet. Other activities varied. At some sites, senior management took an active role over a period of time to ensure implementation. More typically, the program was assigned to others (at the Staff Sergeant, Sergeant or Constable level) to see it through the implementation phases, with the occasional assistance of senior personnel. That assistance usually took the form of senior management reminding Sergeants to have their men distribute the pamphlet, or follow-up memos.

Based on the experience of this program it is apparent that the active support of senior police management is necessary to promote program success. Unless officers see that support exists at that level, it is doubtful they will be inclined to participate. It is not necessary that senior management be involved in the daily operation of the program, but that line officers are made aware that they consider treatment of victims to be important, and that they support all efforts to upgrade the quality of victim services. Officers easily pick up hints when they feel that management is paying lip service to some issue so that support must be strong, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Administrative support is also demonstrated through the attention given to officer training and preparation to the program. At several sites, departments were unprepared for and unaware of the extensive training that would be required to pre-dispose officers to fully engage in the project. Indeed, several department representatives reported they would not have participated in the VAP had they felt that they were required to do this. This being the case, it is likely that at some sites officers did not feel that there was strong management commitment to this program and this may have contributed to its limited implementation in some areas.

GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAM SUCCESS

A program of the sort that has been discussed in this report is considered to have good potential in both small and large police departments and centres. However, there will be variances between each of the communities and departments depending for example on the extent of support services available, or previous police officer exposure to victim programs. Each jurisdiction initiating such a program will need to tailor its program to its particular requirements. As an example, it might be necessary in some communities to promote the establishment of support services elsewhere or police officer training may be significantly different at various sites.

As with any new type of program, unanticipated and unexpected events and conditions surface during the planning, implementation and operational stages. While some can be altered or adapted to without problem, some require reconsideration of the program goals or important changes to its operation.

Following is a discussion of several issues which are considered to be important for successful implementation based on the experience of the 5 case studies discussed earlier. Not all of these issues will be or are problematic in any one site, but are presented so that future program administrators will be alerted to their importance and programs will have a better chance for successful implementation and operation. The issues discussed are:

Program Planning
Understanding Program Rationale and Expectations
Pamphlet Content
Program Management
Availability of Community Support Services
Officer Training and Introduction to Program
Administrative Support
Program Monitoring and Evaluation

3.A. PROGRAM PLANNING

It is necessary to have a definite plan of action in written form instituting this program. It will be important to know exactly what is expected of participants, what conditions indicate successful implementation and operation, and what constitutes success or failure to reach desired goals.

To achieve this, it will be necessary to detail job responsibilities for all participants including activities expected of senior management in support of the program, the role of the program coordinator, and actions police officers are expected to take with respect to victims. This type of elaboration will prevent the program from becoming merely a pamphlet distribution system, a program that is merely a shell with no substance, or one that seriously deviates from its intended role.

In addition, it is necessary to plan its systematic introduction into the department, as well as to put into place some mechanism whereby administrators will know whether it is in full operation or not. A written schedule for program development and implementation would be a definite asset in doing this.

There should also be a firm idea what constitutes success or failure to reach goals. This assumes that goals are well-established in all participants' minds. Writing them down helps immeasureably to focus this in realistic terms. For example, if a goal is to make referrals to community agencies, then records should be kept on the cases where referrals were made in order to determine whether this goal has been achieved. If a goal is to provide appropriate information to crime victims, what activities would indicate that this is being done? If swifter return of property is an objective, one would have to know the average time lapse previously and to keep track of the time lapse under program initiatives to make a comparison.

Program rationale and components have to be clearly articulated so that all parties have the same conception of what the program is. In initiatives such as this, where some services represent only subtle changes to previous activities, or where the changes relate to the quality rather than

quantity of service, the program activities should be discussed in detail and program rationale should be convincingly articulated.

3.B. UNDERSTANDING PROGRAM RATIONALE AND EXPECTATIONS

Briefly, the model program is meant to acquaint crime victims with some services available to them and, through the pamphlet, to provide them with information so that they can access the services they needed. Officers are to pay closer attention to complainants' needs, provide services themselves, and to take an active role in ensuring that victims accessed appropriate services. Officer sensitivity to victim concerns and to service availability is enhanced through in-service training. In effect, officer actions and the pamphlet information are the linking mechanism between victims and services. Appropriate officer attitude, enhanced sensitivity to victims, and increased knowledge about area services are all seen as integral to this program.

Unless attention is paid to the rationale and purpose behind the program, and the activities that are expected of officers and to training which includes these issues, officers may question its value and possibly not implement it. For example, officers may go through the motions of pamphlet distribution, satisfying the minimal demands of the program only. Training should not encourage officers to think that pamphlet distribution is the main focus of the program, but rather that it is one, albeit important, mechanism by which victims' needs are served. This will prevent the program from deteriorating into pamphlet distribution solely.

3.C. PAMPHLET CONTENT

Careful attention needs to be paid to the content in the pamphlet or information package because it plays an important role in linking victim needs and available services.

First, if the pamphlet is to be used province-wide, its content will be significantly different than if it is tailor-made for a specific community. In the former case, services available throughout the jurisdiction are be appropriate and local services are added at each site by way of an insert attached to the pamphlet or a separate printing on a blank section of the pamphlet.

Second, if the pamphlet is to be issued to victims of every criminal act (both property crime and crimes of violence), then it is necessary to speak of the impact of victimization in more general terms than would be the case if it was targetted at victims of only one crime classification. As an example, sexual assault victims require significantly different information than property crime victims. When reviewing the information, the extent that it is appropriate for each group for which it is intended should be the criteria against which to measure its usefulness. For economy of effort, some generalizations will be necessary so that officers do not have to carry around several different pamphlets, but this does not preclude careful choice of material.

The most problematic area will likely be the presentation of material about local services. Careful consideration should be given to those that are most likely needed by recipients. In addition to community groups, this may mean inclusion of services that are available with the police department or other parts of the criminal justice system, so they should not be neglected. Also, a name and telephone number alone is not always sufficient to prompt people to act. It may be a good idea to add a line or two describing what services should be expected there, or who is eligible for the service. As an example, to offer the telephone number of a large social service certainly will not prompt any action if recipients do not know whether it provides financial assistance, provide counselling, or runs a self-help group. Therefore, some brief descriptions would be desirable.

3.D. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Although this type of program is meant to be integrated into the normal activities of all police officers, it will require some input of resources particularly to bring it through its planning and implementation stages. Some monitoring functions will also be necessary. These will require activities for a program coordinator. The reason that this will be necessary is the considerable time that will have to be spent on -

- articulating a program plan - its goals and activities,
- developing and conducting a police officer training course, and
- pamphlet and information production.

It should be emphasized that this type of program is one component of comprehensive police-based victim assistance initiatives. It is not meant to stand alone or to offer the complete range of victim services. In fact, it requires that other services be available in the community or in the police department. This fact requires that some individual be charged with the responsiblity of ensuring that the kind of coordination that is thought desirable actually takes place.

3.A. AVAILABILITY OF SUPPORT SERVICES

The development of a program aimed at improved victim services with no increase in staff presumes that existing services will be accessed to their fullest. Research has shown that:

- community agencies often offer services that can be useful to crime victims,
- police officers often indicate their lack of awareness or information about these services,

- crime victims are often unaware of available services, and
- referrals and access to services can be problematic.

Thus, when a police program seeks not to set up a separate agency to offer the services but to ensure that clients use existing services, a co-ordinated effort with others is necessary. A program of this sort cannot operate in isolation. To attempt this defeats its main operating rationale. It may also be necessary for police department representatives to advocate the extension of some services by others if an important gap in available services is found.

Coordination between agencies cannot be accomplished until there is a good understanding of the services available from all. This should result in a resource directory in which agencies' names, addresses, telephone numbers, contact persons, services offered, methods of access, eligibility of criteria, cost, and hours of operation are listed. To do this requires visiting each agency and including those in the directory that offer some service that could be used by crime victims. This kind of fact-finding work can also serve as the first step in establishing effective inter-agency co-ordination. A contact person should also be designated in each agency. The police program will work only to the extent that referrals are made, others accept the referrals, and that the police can convince the community agencies to provide needed services and to work with them in a common effort. The same training and promotion that is used with police officers can also be used with these groups.

Another way to promote coordination is to set up a program Advisory Council, and to include representatives of other agencies on it. This technique serves to involve others in the program, and gives the Advisory Council and the police department an opportunity to get to know each other over an extended period. It gives others a stake in the program's future and some commitment to the effort. Council members can also be instrumental in getting the program message across to other co-workers and in encouraging them to co-operate with the police. This comes as a result of the fact that by this formal involvement the Advisory Board members and the police department

share common goals and interests.

It is important that this group meet regularly, that it have an organization structure, that goals are set down in writing as well as job responsibilities. The group should also set up a workable and, if possible, formal referral mechanism to ensure that the referrals are appropriately handled. If referrals are written it can also serve as a monitoring function or for evaluation later on. The first (if not all) referrals should be followed-up to ensure they have been appropriate and fruitful. Follow-up will identify any problems in the referral mechanism as well as identifying service mis-information, gaps or overlaps. Representatives from other agencies can also be helpful (and provide professional expertise) in the training programs.

Another way to promote inter-agency cooperation is to invite all groups to the office to let them view the police operation, or for an open-house or workshop. This might be a good kick-off event and an expert in the victim field might be invited to address the group.

It is important to maintain contacts with other agencies during the life of the program. Only this will foster information sharing, common goals and emphathy.

Coordination is also crucial within the police department itself so that its various services are accessible to victims.

For example, the pamphlet informs recipients that information and assistance is available to them from the police department and that they have a right to obtain information on court proceedings with which they are involved. This knowledge is only of value to recipients if mechanisms are made available for that information to be <u>easily</u> accessed by them. Although available, victims often have difficulty in obtaining such information. It may be that this kind of information on a pamphlet requires some changes to existing procedures. Whether this is achieved by upgrading the existing level of service or some procedural change is up to individual departments, but it appears to be a necessary corollary to pamphlet distribution.

The existence of a specialist program in the same department where a program such as VAP is initiated requires that special attention be paid to the role of each and the way that they can dovetail their service activities. It may be that each focuses on a different segment of the crime victim population (e.g., crimes against persons or property crime) or that their distinction lay in the type of service provided (e.g., crisis intervention, referral, information giving, court accompaniment). Alternately, the VAP program may act as a gatekeeper to the victim service system, while the specialist program follows up on the initial work done by the police officer.

If other victim programs exist, then care must be taken that each party understand the role of the others, that there are no jurisdictional squabbles, and that crime victims are not ignored should programs assume the others offer the needed service. Expertise of staff and the practical considerations of service delivery can be determining factors. For example, crisis intervention skills may only be available in some staff, court accompaniment may best be offered by specialist program workers/volunteers.

The existence of one type of program does not preclude the other. Large police departments may require the operation of both specialist and generalist programs because of the number and range of services delivered. In these cases, the generalist program may aim to upgrade the general level of service provided by officers while leaving follow-up or specialist functions to others.

Where only one program exists, it is necessary that its service parameters are wide enough so that its usefulness is not severely restricted. For example, where no specialist program exists, officers would be expected to provide some services that would otherwise be offered by the specialist. This situation requires that good knowledge and coordination exists among officers and community service givers so that referals could be made.

In either case, coordination and communication between services is essential - between generalist and specialist programs, and between police and

community programs.

3.F. OFFICER TRAINING AND INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM

The quality and type of training officers receive in victim issues and service delivery is important for successful program implementation. Because previous levels of victim training differ each locale will have to develop a unique program. If past experience can be used as a guide, it can be assumed that, without preparation and introduction that positively predisposes officers to the program, they will be unlikley to fully implement it.

Police officer training should promote the attitude that officers should provide some victim services, and that victim care is a valid, integral part of police work. Training should be aimed at reducing the feeling that the program asks officers to perform nuisance work that does not fall strictly within the realm of law-enforcement activities. Attitudes such as this have to be expelled before a program such as this will be fully accepted by line officers.

A further value of this type of police training lies in the fact that officers' understanding of victim concerns and needs, of victim rights, of community services, and of the role officers can play in providing service and helping victims access services may predispose them toward implementation of the specific activities asked of them. (Topics that may be included in training programs are discussed in another section of this paper.)

3.G. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

One factor in the acceptance of any new program is the strength of senior management's commitment to it and persistence in seeing that it is implemented. That commitment must be demonstrated and be visible to those who receive the orders. It is often found that while commitment exists, it is not translated into actions which make this clear to others. Therefore, the

actions or perceived lack of them by those in authority can have important repercussions at the field level.

Techniques can range from participation in the training aspect of the program to involvement in public and media relations. It is not necessary that senior management be involved in the daily operations of the program, but through their supportive activities, line officers should be made aware that management considers treatment of victims important and they support all efforts to upgrade the quality of victim services. Officers easily pick up hints when they feel that management is paying lip service to some issue, so support must be strong both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Administrative support is also demanded through the attention given to officer training and preparation for the program. In this situation, departments considering this type of program should be prepared for and aware of the extensive training that is required to predispose officers to fully engage in the project.

3.H. PROGRAM MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Some plan should be envisioned early for getting information from those who are meant to benefit from the program, and a method of identifying them should be put in place.

A reliable form of monitoring should be instituted to check on program implementation and for possible future evaluation. The technique with the greatest potential would have police officers indicate on the occurrence report that a pamphlet was left or some service rendered. These could later be picked up for monitoring purposes or to form part of a sampling frame if evaluation is undertaken.

Other indirect forms of monitoring could involve keeping count of the number of pamphlets remaining in the office, spot checks with victims designated to receive the pamphlets or services, or information from referral agencies. The disadvantage of these methods is that they do not easily

provide a sampling frame for program evaluation.

No program can or should be immune from periodic review. If goals are not being met, changes should be implemented. Evaluations are greatly aided by the existence of base-line data (i.e., what was the level of service before the program?). Some thought should be given about how the program might be evaluated once a certain period has past. Program goals, expectations and activities should be clearly articulated and written down so that results can be measured against them. Deviation does not mean failure, but the reasons for deviation are often crucial and should be understood.